

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE A-10NEW YORK TIMES
13 October 1983

U.S. Is Preparing Bases For the NATO Missiles

STAT

By DREW MIDDLETON

Special to The New York Times

BRUSSELS, Oct. 12 — As the time for NATO deployment of new medium-range nuclear missiles in Western Europe nears, electronic systems and testing equipment are being delivered and control shelters are being built.

According to senior American officials at the headquarters of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization here, the first 41 missiles of the 572 to be set up on the Continent are scheduled to be in place in West Germany, Britain and Italy by Jan. 1. NATO has said deployment is scheduled to begin in December unless American-Soviet negotiations in Geneva produce an agreement on limiting missiles that would make the deployment unnecessary.

In the absence of an agreement, a battery of nine Pershing 2 missiles is to be stationed in West Germany in December in place of the same number of Pershing 1's already there. In addition, two flights of 16 ground-launched, low-flying cruise missiles are to be deployed, one at Greenham Common in England, the other at Comiso in southeastern Sicily.

More SS-20's Are Expected

The full deployment of 572 missiles — 108 Pershing 2's and 464 cruises — is scheduled for completion by 1988. All Pershings are to go to West Germany. Cruise missiles are to be deployed in West Germany as well as in Britain and Italy, and NATO also hopes that some will be placed in Belgium and the Netherlands. The Belgian and Dutch Governments, however, have not yet given their approval.

The Soviet Union has 351 SS-20 intermediate-range missiles targeted at NATO communications, bridges, ports, storage depots and headquarters. Each SS-20 has three warheads.

Intelligence sources here and at the nearby Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe say they expect more SS-20's to be deployed this winter in response to any allied deployment.

Both political and military sources interviewed here and at the headquarters denied reports that the United States had secretly flown components of the missiles to Greenham Common.

Last week the British authorities warned civilian aircraft about heavy air traffic over Greenham Common involving United States Air Force transports. Authoritative American sources said the traffic was related to preparations for the cruise missiles.

The Americans also reported that construction of the cruise missile site at Comiso had been delayed. Before work began at Comiso, the sources said, the Italian construction companies were investigated to see if any had connections with the Mafia. They were cleared, the sources said.

The American military and civilian authorities interviewed in the last 10 days appeared confident that installation of the weapons would ride out protests in Europe.

Surge in Protests Expected

In West Germany, where 200,000 G.I.'s are stationed, the opposition has been less active than expected, the American sources said. This situation is expected to change during the protesters' scheduled "peace week" beginning Sunday.

A United States Seventh Army guidance paper says that although "peaceful demonstrations are the right of any democratic and free people, it is realized that a small terrorist periphery exists whose members may attempt to use violence against any person or property in the Federal Republic."

According to officers familiar with the protesters' plans, the goal of this "periphery" is to force G.I.'s to fire on West German demonstrators. Such a development, they said, would turn an antinuclear demonstration into a German-American confrontation. American sources said they were confident the West German police could handle the situation.

Some highly placed Americans think that much of the steam was taken out of the antinuclear movement when a Soviet pilot shot down a South Korean jetliner near Sakhalin Island last month. Other sources said they thought that the absence of Soviet answers to President Reagan's arms proposals had reduced the impact of the nuclear protesters.